

Appl. No. 09/883,461

Amdt. dated September 8, 2003

Reply to Office Action of August 15, 2002 (Paper No. 11)

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Original) A method for applying drywall mud to drywall tape allowing for lengthy stoppages in a drywall application process, said method comprising: threading a free end of a roll of drywall tape from an outside of a container through a first slot, then through said container, then through a second slot to the outside of said container; placing drywall mud into said container to a level above the drywall tape; drawing said drywall tape through said slots, thereby coating same with drywall mud, tearing off coated drywall tape while leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape; attaching to said drywall tape, between said roll and said first slot, a strip of material having a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud, said strip of material being substantially longer than the distance between said first and second slots, drawing said drywall tape with attached strip of material through said first and second slots until a first end of said strip of material extends outside said container and a second end of said strip of material remains between said roll and said first slot; sealing said container; drawing said drywall tape and applied strip of material through said slots until said second end of said strip of material exits said container through said second slot; tearing off and discarding said strip of material and attached drywall tape, leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more coated drywall tape.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said strip of material is adhesive tape and wherein same is adhesively attached to said drywall tape.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said strip of material has a width substantially

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equal to a width of said drywall tape and a thickness such that said drywall tape and attached strip of material substantially fill said first and second slots when same are drawn therethrough, thereby substantially sealing said first and second slots.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said strip of material is impervious to moisture from mud and wherein same is attached to said drywall tape so as to surround a portion of drywall tape and prevent moisture from said mud contacting said portion of drywall tape.

5. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising adhesively attaching a second strip of adhesive tape to said drywall tape on a side thereof opposite a first strip of adhesive tape.

6. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein said adhesive tape has a width substantially equal to a width of said drywall tape.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising rotatably mounting said roll of drywall tape adjacent to said container.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said container includes an open top and wherein sealing said container is accomplished by sealing said open top.

9. (Original) The method of claims 8 wherein sealing said container further includes sealing said slots.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said slots are sealed by adhesive tape.

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11. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said container comprises sidewalls and a floor, and wherein said slots are substantially horizontal and located on opposing sidewalls in proximity to said floor.

12. (Original) A method for applying drywall mud to drywall tape allowing for lengthy stoppages in a drywall application process, said method comprising: threading a free end of a length of drywall tape, from a roll of drywall tape, from outside a container through a first slot, then through said container, then through a second slot to the outside of said container; placing drywall mud into said container to a level above the drywall tape; drawing said drywall tape through said container and slots, thereby coating same with drywall mud, tearing off coated drywall tape while leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape, adhesively attaching a first strip of adhesive tape to one side of said drywall tape between said roll and said first slot, said first strip of adhesive tape being substantially longer than the distance between said first and second slots, said adhesive tape having a tensile strength substantially unaffected by prolonged exposure to drywall mud; drawing said drywall tape with attached adhesive tape through said first and second slots until a first end of said first strip of adhesive tape extends outside said container and a second end of said first strip of adhesive tape remains between said roll and said first slot; sealing said container; drawing said drywall tape and applied adhesive tape through said slots until said second end of said first strip of adhesive tape exits said container through said second slot; tearing off and discarding said first strip of adhesive tape and attached drywall tape, leaving a free end of drywall tape outside said container available for grasping and pulling more drywall tape.

13. (Cancelled)

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14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)